VZCZCXRO9843
OO RUEHAST RUEHDBU
DE RUEHDBU #0268 0391218
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O R 081218Z FEB 06
FM AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6661
INFO RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY 1395
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 0297
RUEHAST/USOFFICE ASTANA 0025
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1397
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 0521
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHDC
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE USD FAS WASHINGTON DC
RUEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEBAAA/HQ DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RUEAEPA/HQ EPA WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1335
RUEHVV/ISLAMIC CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 1277
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1365
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0243
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1309
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT 0526
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY USAID
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 7765

UNCLAS DUSHANBE 000268

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: KDEM PREL PINR PGOV TI
SUBJECT: NDI REGISTRATION: YOUR DOG'S TAIL IS CROOKED

REF: A) DUSHANBE

¶1. (SBU) Tajik folk wisdom has it that even if all your papers
are in order, inspectors will find something wrong -- your dog's
tail is crooked -- for example. After many promises that
re-registration for National Democratic Institute (NDI)
personnel was solved, it turns out to be unsolved. DCM spent an
hour and a half at the "OVIR" registration office, with many
cell phone calls to the MFA, to no avail. OVIR's English
equivalent is printed at the entrance. The bronze plaque reads:
Departament of Viza and Registration of Foreing Citizens,"
(sic).

¶2. (SBU) The normally two-minute process dragged on and on as
the OVIR Chief Inspector found excuse after excuse for not
re-registering NDI Program Director Nurul Rakhimbekov, a CIS
citizen who must keep a current registration on file. First,
the inspector simply said "no, come back in the afternoon."
Then, she needed the NDI landlord's passport. We dispatched a
driver and 30 minutes later complied. (We learned later that
the landlord has already been summoned to the Prosecutor's
Office for questioning.) Then she complained that Rakhimbekov
could not be registered as an individual since he works for an
NGO. DCM took exception to all of these technicalities and said
the Ambassador has an understanding with the Deputy Foreign
Minister that Rakhimbekov will be registered as an individual,
then local Director Gegham Sargsyan will be registered, also as
an individual, and then we can fight about NDI's registration as
an NGO.

¶3. (SBU) Two cell phone calls with the MFA bought us some time,
but no decision before lunchtime, when we were escorted out. At
that point, the final word was that Rakhimbekov is still legal
until February 15, and so he should not re-register until then.
Throughout the process we kept many other applicants waiting,
and there were groups of other seemingly unoccupied men giving

us malevolent glares.

¶4. (SBU) In the afternoon, DCM again discussed the issue with
MFA North American Chief Nasriddinov, who said he would inform
the Minister of the latest developments.

¶5. (SBU) At about 4:30 DCM called Nasredinov again. He said
the Minister would probably call the Ambassador in on Thursday.
First to discuss a security incident in Washington, then to
assure the Ambassador, once again, that the NDI issue is
"solved." Regarding the security incident, the Tajiks are
looking for a diplomatic note from the State Department about
how to proceed in a case in which their driver was allegedly
assaulted.

¶6. (SBU) COMMENT: The NGO problem is a long way from being
solved. In fact, according to the American Councils' Director,
the Prosecutor's Office has given the green light to
investigators to initiate investigations at any NGO office. The
fine line between investigation and harassment is not always
recognized in Tajikistan and this signal to lower level
officials is likely to be interpreted as open season on NGOs,
particularly American NGOs. Even dogs with straight tails are
likely in for a rough period.

¶7. (U) Kabul minimize considered.

HOAGLAND